

A Study to Assess the Knowledge and Practice of Fast Food Use among School Children in Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Chetan saini¹, Abdul Latif²

¹Research Scholar, Nursing, J.J.T.U. Rajasthan, India

²Research Guide JJT University, Rajasthan, India

Corresponding Author:

Chetan Saini

Research scholar, Nursing, J.J.T.U. Rajasthan, India.

Email: sainichetan720@gmail.com

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Abstract

Background: Fast food is processed and prepared in an industrial fashion. Vitamins, minerals, fibre and amino acids are low or lacking in fast food but has high energy (calories). The present study was done to assess the knowledge and practice of fast food use among children.

Materials and methods: The study design adopted was cross-sectional. Semi-structured self-administered questionnaire were used to collect the data. Time bound enumeration was used to recruit the participants and total 160 children were included in the study.

Results: About 51(31.87%) of the participants had inadequate knowledge, 67(41.88%) of the participants had moderate knowledge and 42(26.25%) of the participants had adequate knowledge about the effect of fast food consumption. The majority of the respondents 116 (72.5%) reported that the main reason for their consumption is a delicious taste of fast food.

Conclusions: Though fast foods are tasty they have low nutritive value and high calories. Nutrition counseling regarding the significance of a balanced diet and harmful effects of fast foods may help to curb the fast food addiction.

Keywords: Knowledge; practice; fast Food

Introduction

Fast food indicates food which is quickly prepared and served at outlets such as fast food restaurants. Healthy nutrition rich foods have been substituted by the new food named as fast food. Fast food is made and processed in an industrial fashion, i.e., with standard ingredients, consistent cooking and production methods. Vitamins, minerals, fiber and amino acids are low or lacking in fast food, but have high energy (calories). In the circumstance of the global economy, fast food is a universal phenomenon. The availability of fast food at minimum prices

and marketing approaches adopted by manufacturers of such foods has elicited a progression of fast food at high rate. Fast food does not contain the nutrients which are required to sustain our body health. Therefore these foods that have low nutritive value are considered injurious to health and may be named as junk food. Popularity of fast food in this era of growth has been attributed to speedy preparation and ease of finishing a food within no time.

Materials and Methods

A cross-sectional study was conducted from June to August 2021 among children's. The study was conducted in two schools in Jaipur district, Rajasthan. Since, we got permission from only two schools and the study period was two months we used time bound enumeration to recruit the participants. Prior permission was taken from the school authorities and depending on the dates given, the study had been carried out. The study was carried out before the commencement of the exams and 160 participants were included in the study. No one refused to take part in the study. There was an active participation from all the children's

Data Collection Methods

Data was obtained from the participants using a semi-structured self-administered questionnaire which included details on socio-demographics of the participants, knowledge and practice of fast food consumption among participants. The questionnaires were formulated based on knowledge and practice of the college students regarding fast food consumption. The questionnaires were prepared based on the local context with regard to the different articles on the same topic of interest. The questionnaires were validated by expert opinion and it was pilot tested. Questionnaires were administered in both Hindi and English languages. The participants had to answer the ten questions to assess their knowledge regarding fast food. Every right answer gained one (1) point and every wrong answer gained zero (0). The overall score ranged from 0–10. Participants with scores 0–3 were considered to have inadequate knowledge, those with 4–7 points had moderate knowledge while those with 8–10 points had adequate knowledge. The participants took approximately 15–20 min to complete the questionnaire.

Result

In the present study 67 (41.9%) participants reported the use of fast food for once in a month. Taste factor (57.6%) and time factor (21.5%) was one of the reasons to choose fast foods. The majority of the participants revealed that the flavour or taste was the key attraction to have fast food.

Table 1- Distribution of respondents based on practice of Fast Food Consumption (n = 160).

The types of fast food and the factors affecting it		Frequency	Percentage
What kind of fast foods do you eat?	Pastries	9	5.6
	Pizza	18	11.2
	French	13	8.2
	Cheese Items	20	12.5
	Chinese Food	100	62.5
How often do you eat fast food?	Once a month	67	41.9
	Once a week	63	39.4
	Twice a week	30	18.7
Eat restaurant fast food regularly?	Yes	15	9.4
	No	30	18.8
	Sometime	115	71.8
Portion size of fast food do you usually eat	Small	49	30.6
	Medium	106	66.2
	Large	5	3.2
why do you eat fast food	delicious taste	116	72.5
	attractive advertisements	11	6.9
	diversity of fast food types	9	5.6
	Convenience	10	6.2
	availability of fast food restaurants	14	8.8

Table 2 Distribution of respondents on the basis of Knowledge (n = 160)

Levels of Knowledge		Frequency	Percentage
Knowledge	Inadequate	51	31.9
	Moderate	67	41.9
	Adequate	42	26.2

Conclusions

Good nutritional diet or balance diet is fundamental need for development and growth of human beings. Most of the students especially children and young adults during their meal time have fast food and get habituated to the taste of the fast food. The fast food consists anything that is

delicious, quick, fashionable and convenient. Though fast foods are tasty they have poor nutritive value and high calories. Nutrition counselling regarding the significance of a balanced diet and harmful effects of fast foods may help to curb the fast food addiction.

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